

CLAIMS

5 A method of providing information to at least one movable platform in an area where signal coverage is not available from an information source, to create an information network, the method comprising steps of:

transmitting an information signal containing the information with a transmitter located at the information source;

receiving the information signal with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a movable platform that is within a signal coverage area of the information source; and

10 re-transmitting the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver located on the at least one movable platform

2. A method of providing information from at least one movable platform in an area where a signal network does not exist between the at least one movable platform and a destination, the method comprising steps of:

15 transmitting an information signal containing the information with a transmitter located on the at least one movable platform;

receiving the information signal with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a movable platform that is within a signal coverage area of the destination; and

20 re-transmitting the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver located at the destination.

3. The method as claimed in claims 1 and 2, further comprising repeating the steps of receiving and re-transmitting the information signal along a signal path with an additional transmitter/receiver unit to provide the information signal between the first transmitter/receiver unit and the at least one movable platform.

4. The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on a fixed platform.

5. The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on a movable platform.

6. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on a pathway and are travelling in the same direction.

7. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms
5 are located on a pathway and are travelling in the opposite direction.

8. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on parallel pathways and are travelling in the same direction.

10 9. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on parallel pathways and are travelling in the opposite directions.

10 10. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on pathways that intersect, and at least one of the two movable platforms is
15 travelling towards the intersection.

11. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on pathways that intersect, and at least one of the two movable platforms is travelling away from the intersection.

12. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least one of the movable platforms is not located on a pathway.

13. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the movable platforms
25 are located on a pathway, and further comprising a step of monitoring the movable platforms and information signals along the pathway with a pathway station.

14. The method as claimed in claim 5 further including a step of providing the information signal to a movable platform located in an area where there is an insufficient
30 number of available movable platforms to provide a signal, with a supplemental communication system.

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15. A system that provides information to and from a destination which is in an area where signal coverage is otherwise not available from an information source, comprising:

the information source including a transmitter unit that transmits the information
5 signal;

a transmitter/receiver unit located on a movable platform that is within a signal coverage area of the information source, that receives the information signal and that re-transmits the information signal; and

the destination including a receiver that receives the information signal.

16. The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the transmitter/receiver unit is located on a the movable platform in an area where there is an already existing communication channel.

17. The system as claimed in claim 15, further including at least one additional transmitter/receiver unit, located on a movable platform, that receives and re-transmits the information signal to provide the information signal between the information source and the destination.

18. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the movable platforms are ground vehicles.

19. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the movable platforms are aircraft.

20. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on a pathway and are travelling in the same direction.


21. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on a pathway and are travelling in opposite directions.


22. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on parallel pathways and are travelling in the same direction.

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transmitting an information signal containing the information from an information source to a transmitter/receiver unit located on a first movable platform;

re-transmitting the information signal with the transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver that is located on a second movable platform.

32. The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the first and second movable platforms are located on a pathway and are travelling in opposite directions.

34. The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the first and second movable platforms are located on parallel pathways, and are travelling in opposite directions.

36. The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the first and second movable platforms are located on pathways that intersect, and at least one of the first and second movable platforms is travelling away from the intersection.

37. The method as claimed in claim 30 wherein at least one of the movable platforms
30 is not located on a pathway.

38. The method as claimed in claim 30, further comprising repeating the steps of receiving and re-transmitting the information signal with at least one additional transmitter/receiver unit located on a third movable platform, to provide the information signal between the first movable platform and the second movable platform.

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39. The method as claimed in claim 38, wherein the step of re-transmitting the information signal with the at least one additional transmitter/receiver units includes transmitting the information signal to a receiver unit located on a fourth movable platform.

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